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# **GRASSES and LEGUMES** their environmental role in **ALABAMA**

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CATALOGING - PREP.





Grasses and legumes help feed man and animals, provide income, beautify lawns, parks, and playgrounds, and protect and enrich our soil. Earthen dams, road cuts, and other construction sites are safer, more beautiful, and more economical to maintain when covered with grass and legumes. The introduction of bahiagrass, coastal bermudagrass, tall fescue, and improved clovers is helping to build a sound foundation for Alabama's growing livestock industry. New plants such as arrowleaf clover bring income to Alabama's seed producers. Dwarf bermudagrass and zoysia have played an important role in recreational enterprises. Grasses and legumes are truly versatile plants that influence our quality of life in many ways. They will play an even more important role in the future as they help conserve and improve the total environment for the benefit of all citizens of Alabama.



**TALL FESCUE**



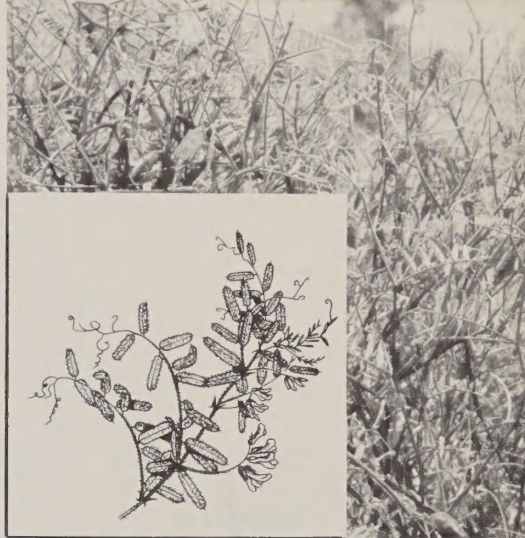
**COASTAL BERMUDA**



**BAHIAGRASS**



**SERICEA**



**VETCH**



**ZOYSIA**



**YUCHI ARROWLEAF CLOVER**



**CLOVER**



# GRASSES

## Common Names

Bahiagrass  
 Centipedegrass  
 Coastal bermudagrass  
 Common bermudagrass  
 Dallisgrass  
 Johnsongrass  
 Oats  
 Orchardgrass  
 Pearlmillet  
 Rye  
 Ryegrass  
 Saint Augustinegrass  
 Sudan  
 Tall fescue  
 Weeping lovegrass  
 Wheat  
 Zoysia

## Scientific Names

*Paspalum notatum*  
*Eremochloa ophiuroides*  
*Cynodon dactylon* var.  
*Cynodon dactylon*  
*Paspalum dilatatum*  
*Sorghum halepense*  
*Avena sativa*  
*Dactylis glomerata*  
*Pennisetum glaucum*  
*Secale cereale*  
*Lolium multiflorum*  
*Stenotaphrum secundatum*  
*Sorghum sudanense*  
*Festuca arundinacea*  
*Eragrostis curvula*  
*Triticum aestivum*  
*Zoysia* spp.

## Chief Use

Pasture  
 Lawns and recreational areas  
 Hay and pasture  
 Pasture, critical areas, lawns and recreational areas  
 Pasture and hay  
 Hay and pasture  
 Winter pasture, hay and grain  
 Pasture and hay  
 Summer grazing  
 Winter pasture and grain  
 Winter pasture, lawns and recreational areas  
 Lawns and recreational areas  
 Summer pasture  
 Pasture, hay and recreational areas  
 Critical areas  
 Winter pasture and grain  
 Lawns and recreational areas

# LEGUMES

## Common Names

Alfalfa  
 Arrowleaf clover  
 Ball clover  
 Bicolor  
 Burclover  
 Buttonclover  
 Caley peas  
 Crimson clover  
 Kudzu  
 Large partridgepea  
 Lespedeza (annual)  
 Red clover  
 Sericea  
 Sweetclover  
 Tickclover  
 Vetches  
 White clover

## Scientific Names

*Medicago sativa*  
*Trifolium vesiculosum*  
*Trifolium nigrescens*  
*Lespedeza bicolor*  
*Medicago spp.*  
*Medicago orbicularis*  
*Lathyrus hirsutus*  
*Trifolium incarnatum*  
*Pueraria thunbergiana*  
*Chamaecrista fasciculata*  
*Lespedeza spp.*  
*Trifolium pratense*  
*Lespedeza cuneata*  
*Melilotus spp.*  
*Desmodium perplexum*  
*Vicia spp.*  
*Trifolium repens*

## Chief Use

Hay  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Wildlife  
 Pasture  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Critical areas, pasture and hay  
 Wildlife  
 Hay, pasture, and wildlife  
 Hay  
 Hay, pasture and critical areas  
 Pasture  
 Wildlife  
 Pasture and winter cover  
 Pasture

After annual grasses and legumes have served their purpose as cover crops, their residues are incorporated into the soil. This aids in maintaining fertility, improving moisture holding capability and preserving soil tilth.



*Vegetation helps protect soil in skip-row cotton*

# GRASSES AND LEGUMES IN CROPLAND

Annual grasses and legumes provide quick cover that protects the soil between crops and on areas of the field that are not actually used for crop production,



*Cover crop protects land during winter*





*Sod crop being turned for row crop*

Growing grasses and legumes in rotation with cultivated crops is good business. Sod-based cropping systems mean less soil lost to erosion; more water entering the soil; more water available for plant use; less insect and disease problems; fewer weeds; and improved soil tilth. These all add up to higher net returns.



*Field Borders*



*Grassed Waterways*

Grasses and legumes provide cover for waterways and field borders. Waterways and field borders are used to safely remove runoff water and make the use of farm machinery more convenient.

# PERMANENT PASTURES

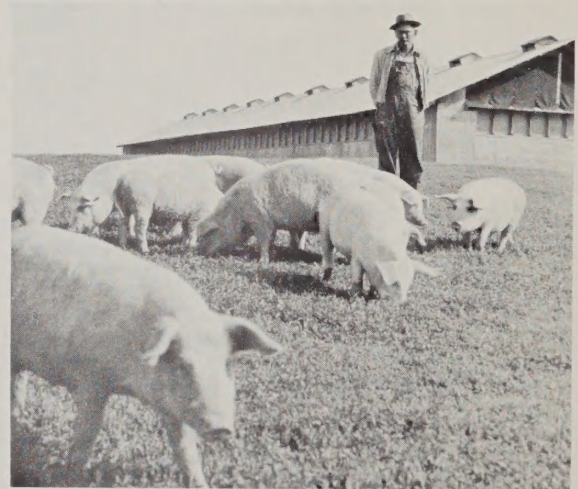
Perennial grasses and legumes provide the base for pasture systems. Well planned pasture programs include a balance of warm and cool season plants.



*Fescue is a dependable cool season pasture*



*Bahiagrass - a productive summer pasture*



*Hogs grazing White Clover*



# TEMPORARY PASTURES



*Ball Clover - a nutritious reseeding plant*

Temporary pastures supplement perennial pastures during periods of low production and when additional forage is needed.



*Small Grain provides early spring grazing*



*Cattle grazing millet in mid-summer*





*Harvesting Hay*

# HAYLANDS

Hay provides a dependable and economical source of livestock feed. Several good hay plants are adapted to Alabama soils and climate.



*Planting Coastal Bermudagrass*



*Cattle eating Coastal Bermuda hay*



*Negative protection on small watershed dam*



*Grass provides cover and access to improved channel*



## **WATERSHED and RC&D PROJECTS**

Grasses and legumes play an important role in protecting works of improvement in RC&D and small watershed projects. They provide quick protection; are reasonably cheap to establish; are easy to maintain and add natural beauty.



*Strip Mine Restoration*



*Critical area stabilization reduces erosion, sedimentation, and pollution.*

*Grasses and legumes give roadbank protection and add natural beauty.*



*Seed Harvest*

## OTHER USES







Grasses and legumes provide food and cover for wildlife.



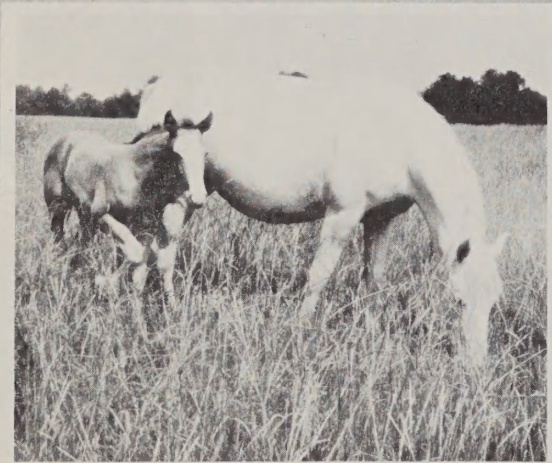
Alabamians have an excellent selection of turf grasses to use in the beautification and protection of their homes and playgrounds.

# GRASSES AND LEGUMES ARE VITAL

...to conservation

...to animals

...to man







**...to quality environment.**



